

FAYETTE COUNTY

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PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. All Children to live in drug-free environment
2. Assure community resources are available to entire family
3. Increase leveraging potential for Children's Policy Council

Issues

Issues are the primary concerns or problems facing children in the county.

Health - Children's (0 - 19) physical and mental well-being in the county.

Growing presence of methamphetamine

Policy Council Action Steps:

- work for more laws to restrict the purchase of materials to manufacture methamphetamine
- develop more educational programs in the schools and community about the dangers of the use of drugs

Non-enforcement of Tobacco use/sale to county youth

Policy Council Action Steps:

- continue to provide education to the community on the dangers of tobacco use
- encourage greater enforcement of laws concerning tobacco use by youth and provide information to the public on which facilities are tobacco free
- communicate with the schools on the need to enforce policy and rules related to the possession and use of tobacco products by staff and students

Safety - Children live free of abuse, neglect, crime, and drugs.

Drug Abuse- particularly Methamphetamine and prescription drugs

Policy Council Action Steps:

- educate law enforcement, DHR staff, JPO, medical personnel, mental health staff, court officials, educators, and any other individuals on the dangers associated with the manufacture of Methamphetamine by sponsoring training sessions
- educate the general public on the dangers and effects associated with drug usage
- explore options and develop resources to help decrease the financial impact on family members who are caregivers of children whose parents are involved with drugs and therefore not providing for the children's needs

Sexual Abuse

Policy Council Action Steps:

- educate parents on the danger of children becoming involved with internet pornography
- educate youth on laws relating to statutory rape, sexual harassment, and responsibility of absent parents, particularly fathers
- explore and develop services within the community for young sexual offenders

Lack of a short term detention facility close to our community

Policy Council Action Steps:

- support the county efforts to open a short-term detention facility by calling on the county commission, mayors, and city councils for financial support for this facility

After the youth in this community reach the age of 14, activities for them are limited

Policy Council Action Steps:

- focus groups with young people, particularly middle schools age children, to discuss topics such as what constitutes sexual harassment and bullying
- explore programs and encourage the development of opportunities for youth to be involved. A variety of activities need to be developed to encompass a wide variety of interests. This would include all sports, drama, music, and other interests

Education - Children

learn the skills necessary to become productive citizens.

Attendance of students in county schools

Policy Council Action Steps:

- decrease student absenteeism by pursuing funding for a full-time truancy officer in the county school system
- involve DHR personnel where appropriate to assist families with situations associated with unacceptable levels of absenteeism
- encourage school-based incentive programs for students with perfect or near-perfect attendance
- adequately publicize attendance laws, policies, and penalties

Prevention of student dropouts in the county

Policy Council Action Steps:

- decrease student absenteeism by pursuing funding for a full-time truancy officer in the county school system
- meet students' personal needs, and reduce potential problems leading to dropouts by pursuing funding for a mental health worker for the school system
- eliminate or reduce retention by supporting K-3 summer reading or enrichment programs
- eliminate or reduce retention by supporting funding for summer enrichment or regular academic programs through Children First and other local or state agencies

Early Care and

Education - Children (0 – 5) are provided opportunities to fully develop emotionally, socially, physically, and cognitively and are ready to succeed.

Lack of public awareness of available resources

Policy Council Action Steps:

- obtain funding and support for a family resource center
- prepare a community resource list

Funding to increase amount of resources

Policy Council Action Steps:

- lobby for legislation for a tobacco permit's fee to go to children programs
- seek grant opportunities

Lack of transportation to obtain services

Policy Council Action Steps:

- look into whether faith-based organizations could provide some transportation
- publicize the Kid 1 service

Economic Security

- Children grow up in a financially stable home where the child's basic needs can be met.

Job Opportunities (high tech)

Policy Council Action Steps:

- promote technology within current school system and encourage students to look closely at technology positions available in local market area
- have business and industry identify technological needs for prospective students and future employees
- encourage local business to look at ways technology can advance their business and how educated students may be able to assist them in this growth

Education equals economic opportunities

Policy Council Action Steps:

- have speakers from private sector as part of core curriculum
- promote school-sponsored tours of private businesses to let students understand what corporate America looks like on a daily basis

Job opportunities (hands on skilled based)

Policy Council Action Steps:

- vocational training for students must be made available
- vocational training for students must be relevant to the type of jobs that are offered in today's business environment This will mean that the vocational training offered students able to compete with other areas when it comes time to interview for automotive type skill labor jobs

Parent Involvement

and Skills - Parents and guardians participation and effectiveness in fostering an environment for children to become mature, responsible and independent adults.

More parenting class alternative to *Parent Project*

Policy Council Action Steps:

- obtain video/CD Rom "Parenting Wisely"
- obtain facility such as faith-based organization/Family Resource Center for viewing "Parenting Wisely" or similar programs
- seek information for mother agencies as to parenting classes

Parenting Classes for parents with special needs children

Policy Council Action Steps:

- seek training
- seek grant funding for the same

Policy Recommendation

1. Fee for tobacco permits with proceeds to go to CPC or Family Resource Centers
2. Secure funding for a Family Resource Center site
3. Require mandatory marriage training prior to obtaining a marriage license
4. Promote a constitutional amendment to require the passage of state budgets during the regular session of the legislature
5. Promote legislation for asset-seizure money from criminal cases to go to CPC or children's program
6. Promote legislation for asset-seizure money for criminal cases to go to economic development directors